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ABSTRACT

Faculty from 16 food service and hotel technology programs in New York two-year colleges were surveyed to determine the components of faculty decisions concerning participation in professional improvement activities aimed at updating knowledge, to explore the function and relationship of the components of a composite expectancy model which provided a framework for the study, to replicate a previous test of a commonly used model, and to generate practical implications. Survey techniques involved a mailed questionnaire (98 respondents out of 135 contacted), oral interviews with a stratified random sample of 32, and a written questionnaire completed by 18 of those interviewed. Participants rated 19 activities that could result in professional improvement; working in the hospitality industry, receiving student feedback, and reading books were chosen as most desirable. Faculty considered these activities more likely than others to help them keep current in their subject matter specialty. In relation to personal resources and past experiences, certain activities were rated as less likely to be completed. However, respondents felt knowledge update was highly desirable and instrumental. The expectancy theory proved to be relevant in examining faculty motivation toward professional improvement. (TR)

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FACULTY MOTIVATION TOWARD PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT: A STUDY OF TWO-YEAR COLLEGE FACULTY

by

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Abstract

Faculty Motivation Toward Professional Improvement:
A Study of Two-year College Faculty

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A study of two-year college faculty was conducted in order to increase understanding of the components of faculty decisions concerning participation in professional improvement activities. Expectancy motivation theory provided the framework for a mailed questionnaire, interviews, and an interview questionnaire. Faculty were found to have activity preferences and to consider that some activities were more likely than others to help them keep current in their subject matter specialty. After considering factors such as resources and past experiences, there were certain activities they did not expect to complete. Faculty felt gaining knowledge update was highly desirable and instrumental for attaining certain desired outcomes. Some job related outcomes were found to be more desirable than others.

Expectancy theory was found to be a relevant way of examining faculty motivation toward professional improvement and practical implications for those interested in promoting faculty development were discovered.

Faculty Motivation Toward Professional Improvement: A Study of Two-Year College Faculty

Interest in faculty professional improvement has been increasing largely due to pressures in two areas: 1) students and society are more outspoken, demanding that higher education be accountable to their needs, and 2) declining enrollments have reduced faculty mobility between institutions leading faculty to seek stimulation and growth in other ways (Wergin, Mason, and Munson, 1976). Those who feel they have carried out successful faculty development programs have written about and subjectively evaluated their experiences (e.g., Zion and Sutton, 1973). Needs assessments have been conducted in order that programs can be structured which will attempt to respond to the interests and needs of faculty development within a theoretical framework (e.g., Gaff, 1975). However, there appears to be little or no substantive discussion in the literature on why faculty are motivated to seek professional improvement.

This study examined faculty motivation toward professional improvement within the framework of a motivation theory. Activities faculty find desirable for professional improvement and their likelihood of participation in them were determined. Job related outcomes which faculty desire were also delineated as well as the perception faculty have concerning the relationship of professional development activities to these outcomes. Some practical implications for persons concerned with facilitating professional improvement of faculty are suggested.

Framework for the Study

A New York State study of two-year college occupational education faculty (Beamish, Corwin, and Tobin, 1977) found faculty expressing a much greater need for professional development activities which enable them to keep current in their subject matter areas than for activities concerned with curriculum,

teaching skills, or evaluation. Because of this finding it was decided to concentrate this study on the motivation of faculty toward professional improvement concerned with updating knowledge.

A number of motivation theories were examined for their potential to provide a framework for the study. The theories of Maslow and Herzberg were rejected because they had been disconfirmed by a large percentage of investigations. Expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) seemed to have received adequate research support (Filley, House, and Kerr, 1976). Although it is less well known to educators, expectancy theory is probably the most widely accepted motivation theory in industrial and organizational psychology today (Wahba and House, 1974).

The model, shown schematically in Figure 1, was developed for this study from Campbell and Pritchard's (1976) expectancy model. It illustrates how a faculty member decides whether, and how intensively, to engage in professional improvement activity. He will base his decision on his view of:

1) how likely he will be able to complete the activity if he expends effort to do so (Expectancy);

2) whether he thinks completion of the activity will result in knowledge update (Instrumentality - I_1);

3) whether knowledge update will be likely to result in certain job-related outcomes (Instrumentality - I_2);

4) whether he finds these outcomes to be something he desires (Valence - V_o).

The three major goals of the study were: to determine the function and relationship of the components of the composite expectancy model; to replicate a previous test of a commonly used expectancy model; and to determine practical implications.

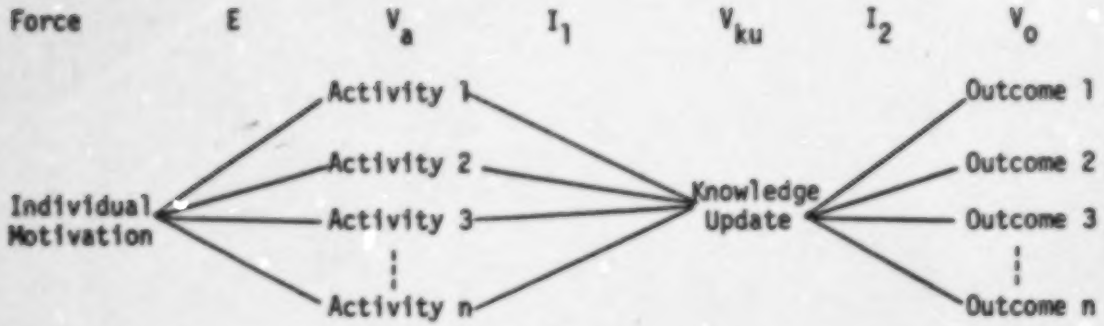

Figure 1: Composite Expectancy Model for Faculty Professional Improvement

Definitions

Force: Force to expend a specific level of effort.

E: Expectancy - perceived probability of successful completion of a professional improvement activity.

V_a: Valence of activity - the anticipated satisfaction from completion (which is a function of the instrumentality of the activity for acquiring knowledge update).

I_1: Instrumentality One - the perceived degree of relationship between completion of an activity and knowledge update.

V_{ku}: Valence of knowledge update - the attractiveness of knowledge update (which is a function of its instrumentality for attaining job-related outcomes).

I_2: Instrumentality Two - the perceived degree of relationship between acquiring knowledge update and attainment of job-related outcomes.

V_o Valence of job-related outcomes - the anticipated satisfaction from obtaining them.

Methodology

The sample

The 135 faculty from sixteen food service and hotel technology programs in two-year colleges in the State University of New York comprised the study population. A single occupational area was selected for two reasons; first, the body of knowledge being examined would be nearly the same for all persons in the study; and second, the choices of professional improvement activities available for knowledge update would also be familiar to all.

The field of food service and hotel technology is in many ways a microcosm of two-year college occupational programs:

1. it includes both associate degree and certificate programs;
2. it attracts both male and female faculty and students;
3. it is found in various types of two-year colleges;
4. it is concerned with accrediting requirements (American Dietetic Association);
5. the field is a technical one frequently subjected to new laws, exposed to new products and new equipment.

Survey techniques

Three survey techniques were used: a written questionnaire delivered through the mail, a written questionnaire administered to the interview sample, and oral interview questions. The sample to be interviewed was selected through stratified random sampling technique.

The major portion of the mail questionnaire consisted of verbally anchored, bi-polar, seven point scales which measured each component of the model separately. Many previous studies utilizing expectancy theory have used this type of scale including Broedling (1975), Matsui and Ikeda (1976), Mitchell and Nebeker (1973), Parker and Dyer (1976), and Schmitt (1975).

Data Analysis

Questionnaires were returned by 98 faculty which was 73% of the population selected for study. Thirty-two persons were interviewed. Eighteen of these completed the interview questionnaire. The interview sample and the self-selected mail questionnaire return sample were not significantly different from the total population.

Data from the mail questionnaire and quantifiable data from the interviews were analyzed using frequency distributions and cross tabulation. Interview data were also subjected to content analysis. Data from the interview questionnaire were hand tabulated according to commonly used expectancy theory formula (Parker and Dyer, 1976).

The Findings

Activities Faculty Find Desirable

Nineteen activities which could result in professional improvement were rated by faculty. The three most desirable activities for professional improvement were working in the hospitality industry, receiving student feedback, and reading books (Table 1).

Activities Which Lead to Knowledge Update

Faculty indicated whether they thought they would have obtained updated knowledge from participation in these activities. In Table 1, the percentage who felt attainment of knowledge update was "very" or "extremely likely" is given for each activity under update potential (Instrumentality One). Activities selected by 50% or more of the faculty as most likely to lead to knowledge update were working in the hospitality industry, reading trade journals, reading books, summer short courses or workshops, trade shows, and conferences or seminars sponsored by professional organizations.

Not all activities rated desirable were considered so simply because completion of them would result in updated subject matter knowledge. Activities among the top ten for desirability (Valence) but not among the top ten for

update potential (Instrumentality One) were student feedback and visits to other two-year college food service and hotel technology programs. Professional improvement in areas other than knowledge update are probably anticipated from participation in these activities.

Expectancy of Completion of Activities

Faculty indicated whether they expected to complete an activity on a seven point scale ranging from "No chance of completion" to "Completion certain". In Table 1, the percentage who felt completion would be "very likely" or "certain" is given for each activity under possibility of completion (Expectancy). Activities which 50% or more of the faculty were quite certain they would complete were receiving student feedback, reading trade journals, working in the hospitality industry, reading books, and attending trade shows.

The interview data indicate that faculty base their judgments about probability of completion of an activity on three main considerations: resources at their disposal (time, money), past experience with the activity, and relevancy of content to their teaching. Faculty specifically mentioned location and travel distance most frequently but this can be viewed as an operationalized form of time and money.

Past Participation

Measures of faculty past participation were obtained for some of the nineteen activities. Faculty were most likely to have participated in activities which they felt would help them maintain currency in their subject matter areas (Instrumentality One). Other studies using an expectancy theory framework have found popularity of an activity (Valence) to be the poorest predictor of performance. Other factors are operating when the actual decision concerning participation is carried out, including perceived possibility of completion (Expectancy).

Demographic Variation

Table 2 shows the variation in response to questions concerning activities attributable to demographic variables. Education level, age, and institution type appeared to have the greatest overall influence on the way activities were perceived.

Surprisingly, no statistically significant differences were noted for the variable tenure. The response to an activity appears to be independent of whether faculty are tenured or non-tenured.

Synthesis of Findings About Selected Activities

For persons planning professional development activities it is helpful to combine information from Tables 1 and 2. Some examples follow.

Working In Industry. Working in industry was considered the most desirable activity. Males are much more likely to hold this view than females and they are more likely to expect to complete this activity. Interview data indicated that females are more likely to have responsibilities caring for children. This fact may account for some of the difference.

Younger faculty are more likely to expect to complete working in industry than are older. Some older faculty in the interview sample stated that they chose to teach in order to escape the pressures of an industrial position. The long hours involved in adding industry work to teaching may partially account for this variation. Some interviewees indicated that they considered problems of fatigue before deciding whether to work in industry.

Past participation levels for working in industry are high relative to those for other activities involving large time commitments (e.g., college courses). Fifty-eight percent of full time faculty in the interview sample were working in industry, either concurrently with their teaching or during vacations. There was no statistically significant relationship between faculty desire for pay increases and their rating of working in industry as a desirable professional improvement activity. However, since one fourth of the faculty

said that both pay increases and working in industry were extremely desirable, this group may be seeking dual outcomes from working in industry.

During the interviews, individual faculty volunteered comments concerning benefits, other than knowledge update, which might accrue from working in industry. These included credibility for placement of program graduates and ease of learning about and access to industrial education seminars.

College courses. College courses have the lowest past participation levels of any activity for which data were gathered. Slightly less than half the faculty viewed college courses as likely to lead to attainment of knowledge update (Instrumentality One), found them desirable (Valence), or expected to complete them (Expectancy). Interviewed faculty frequently mentioned lack of availability of courses with appropriate subject matter.

Of the faculty who responded to the mail questionnaire, 42% held master's degrees. These faculty were much more likely to expect to complete college courses, to think they were highly desirable, and to see them as instrumental for knowledge update.

Preference for Professional Improvement Topics

To compare this group of faculty with the results of the New York State needs assessment (Beamish, et. al., 1977), interviewees were asked to rank the desirability of possible professional improvement workshop topics. Keeping current in the subject matter area of the food service or hotel technology faculty member (i.e., knowledge update) received the second largest "vote". (See Table 3). The first ranked topic area (advising and counseling students about jobs) has a subject matter component and a necessity for keeping current also. This strong interest in keeping current in their subject matter fields supports the similar findings of the previous needs assessment.

There was some variation in choice of topics by demographic variables.

Full-time faculty were much more interested in advising and counseling than were part-time faculty or department chairpersons. Department chairpersons exhibited the greatest variability in preference for this topic. Preference for "curriculum writing, planning, and evaluation" also varied by position type. Department chairpersons had the greatest unanimity of high selection; 60% gave this topic a rank of first and second. All faculty in their first year of teaching ranked "advising and counseling" as first or second choice. More experienced faculty gave this topic a variety of rankings. Test design was usually ranked relatively high by those with higher education levels.

Faculty Effort to Engage in Activities

A faculty member will put forth effort to engage in an activity primarily when he/she perceives the results are necessary for attainment of desired outcomes. If a faculty member thinks an activity can probably be completed if attempted, that completion will result in knowledge update and also thinks that knowledge update is likely to result in a desired job-related outcome, then he/she is likely to put forth the effort to engage in the activity.

Outcomes Faculty Find Desirable

Faculty rated twenty outcomes which could occur as part of their jobs. The three most desired outcomes were feeling self-fulfilled and satisfied, freedom to plan and make decisions concerning classroom activities, and feeling that your job and what you do is important (Table 4).

It is notable that the usual rewards of an academic institution--assurance of continued employment after a probationary period, pay increases, and promotion--are at the bottom of the ranking of desirability (Valence) of outcomes. Because it is often held that these outcomes are of less value to females, it is also notable that there was no statistically significant difference by sex as to the desirability of these outcomes.

Outcomes Attained Through Knowledge Update

Faculty indicated whether they thought that possessing updated knowledge

would result in these job-related outcomes. Knowledge update was seen by 55% or more of the faculty to have potential for attainment of the following outcomes (Instrumentality Two): Opportunities to help students learn information needed for successful job performance, feeling of self-fulfillment and satisfaction, feeling that your job and what you do is important, helping students make decisions regarding personal and professional goals, and high quality programs that attract students (Table 4).

Demographic Variation

Education level and status (tenure or nontenure) were responsible for most of the variation in response as to desirability of outcomes (Table 5). The demographic variables responsible for most of the variation in perceived outcome potential (Instrumentality Two) were teaching experiences and age. As faculty increase in age and have taught longer, they are more likely to see knowledge update as instrumental for attaining a number of desired outcomes.

Test of the Expectancy Model

In the test of the expectancy model most commonly used in organizational psychology, levels of faculty participation in professional improvement activities were correctly predicted in 67% of the cases using the methods of analysis which had been used by Parker and Dyer (1976). This and other findings support the use of expectancy theory for examining faculty motivation toward professional improvement.

Stimulating Faculty Professional Growth

Results of the study suggest that administrative encouragement will not necessarily result in high levels of faculty participation in professional improvement activities but that if administrators are apathetic, a likely result will be apathy on the part of faculty. Two thirds of the faculty do not think participation in activities leading to knowledge update will have

much influence on the amount of encouragement and support they receive from administrators even though they feel such encouragement and support is highly desirable.

On examination of the outcomes faculty ranked as desirable (Valence) in Table 4 it can be seen that two outcomes related to prestige have been ranked low: "respect from persons in the community" and "prestige among food and hsopitality educators". Awards to faculty for excellent teaching are likely to be ineffective in encouraging professional improvement when prestige is ranked low in desirability. More to the point would be to reinforce a desired outcome. For example, an administrator might seek student feedback concerning professional improvement after a faculty member has participated in a faculty development activity. This information could then be relayed back to the faculty member.

In their free response to questions concerning considerations in making decisions regarding professional development activities interviewees mentioned administrators in the following frequencies: College presidents, 9%; chief academic officer, 38%; division chairperson, 31%; department chairperson, 22%. Most frequently mentioned (41%) were other faculty. Some faculty (16%) state that no one on campus was encouraging them to keep up to date.

The highest response rate for any single activity as to possibility of completion (Expectancy) was 61%, indicating that completion of professional improvement activities is far from certain. Activities that have high relative rankings for both desirability (Valence) and update potential (Instrumentality One) may rate quite low on possibility of completion (Expectancy). Local administrators may wish to seek elimination of obstacles to expectancy of completion of such activities.

The time of year at which an activity is scheduled seems to be important. The time found to be most suitable to all interviewed faculty was immediately after grades had been turned in for the second semester. For statewide workshops or other activities the lack of a uniform calendar is an obstacle because the end of the second semester differs as much as a month from college to college.

Summary and New Directions

A composite expectancy theory model was found to be useful in investigating faculty motivation toward professional improvement. Examining whether faculty consider they will be able to complete certain professional development activities, the instrumentality they feel these activities have for desired outcomes, and the desirability of job-related outcomes was found to be a relevant way of examining faculty motivation.

The paucity of substantial research on motivation of faculty toward professional improvement is such that a great many areas are in need of study. A similar study in another occupational field would aid in generalizability of results. Longitudinal, cross-lag designs would enable the researcher to see if the theory is actually predictive. The component parts of the theory are also in need of in-depth exploration. Other theories which have been found to have explanatory power as the result of industry research may also warrant use by educators.

This research was supported by the Cornell Institute for Research and Development in Occupational Education, Cornell University in cooperation with the New York State Education Department.

TABLE 1

FACULTY VIEWPOINTS ON PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Activity	Percent Selecting Two Highest Response Categories		
	(Valence)	(Instrumentality One)	(Expectancy)
(Rank Order by Valence)	Desirability	Update Potential	Possibility of Completion
Working in the hospitality industry	78%	72%	58%
Student feedback	65	39	61
Reading books	60	59	57
Reading trade journals	56	62	61
Conferences or seminars sponsored by NRA, AHMA, or CHRIE	55	52	33
Field trips with students	54	43	50
Conversations with other two-year college food service and hotel technology faculty	54	45	39
Visits to other two-year college food service and hotel technology programs	53	38	29
Summer short courses or workshops	51	58	34
Workshops sponsored by professional associations	49	47	32
College courses	47	43	43
Trade shows	44	57	50
Video tapes designed for occupational educators' self-improvement	39	32	29
Exchange program with faculty of other two-year colleges	39	32	15
In-service short courses or workshops sponsored by your two-year college	34	42	33
Read manufacturer's literature, equipment catalogues	30	37	38
Observation of other classes within your department	28	26	33
Informal observation and evaluation of your classes by other faculty	27	25	33
Newsletters	26	43	40

TABLE 2

VARIATIONS IN RESPONSE TO ACTIVITIES BY DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Given as Percentages Selecting the Two Highest Response Categories

Activity (Rank Order by Valence)	(Valence) Desirability							(Instrumentality One) Update Potential							(Expectancy) Possibility of Completion						
	Instruction Type	Position Type	Years Teaching Experience	Highest Education	Age	Sex		Instruction Type	Position Type	Years Teaching Experience	Highest Education	Age	Sex		Instruction Type	Position Type	Years Teaching Experience	Highest Education	Age	Sex	
	AT, CC	Full, Pt	0.1-10, 11	AS, BA, MA	-40, 40+	M, F		AT, CC	Full, Pt	0.1-10, 11	AS, BA, MA	-40, 40+	M, F		AT, CC	Full, Pt	0.1-10, 11	AS, BA, MA	-40, 40+	M, F	
Working in industry					74 48	70 27							89 57								
Student feedback				31 71 65	71 54			54 64	59 77												
Reading books								67 57												52 64	
Reading trade journals										44 53 77											
Conferences, NRA, etc.																					
Field trips		56 39						70 47		31 53 82		48 59									
Faculty conversations		44 26								31 55 71											
Program visits		32 19										43 59									
Summer short courses	56 26			19 35 40				74 43										44 49 73	43 71		
Workshops, professional																75 46 25					
College courses				38 36 52							33 38 61							31 41 53			
Trade shows						32 45					56 51 29		49 34								
Vi[illegible]capes																56 28 18				39 43	

NOTE: Percentages are given only for those variables for which variation in response was statistically significant. ($p < .05$)

Definitions

AT - Agricultural and Technical College; CC - Community College

Full - Full time; Pt - Part time

AS - Associate degree or less; BA - Bachelor's degree; MA - Master's degree

TABLE 3

FACULTY CHOICE OF WORKSHOP TOPICS

(Interview Date - N=30)

Topic	Percent of Faculty Who Ranked The Topic as 1st or 2nd Choice
Advising and counseling students about preparation for obtaining jobs in the food and hospitality industry	57%
*Newly developed food products, new equipment, recently passed laws and regulations for the food and hospitality industry	48
Audio-visual aid creation and/or utilization	33
Educational games and other methods of maintaining student interest	23
Curriculum writing, planning, evaluation	20
Designing tests for students	10
Evaluation of students	7
Interpersonal relationship with peers and administrators	6

* An alternate form was used for faculty teaching predominately nutrition courses which read:

Results of recent research on nutrition; new food products for special diets; recent developments in food processing; new equipment.

TABLE 4

VIEWPOINTS ON JOB-RELATED OUTCOMES

Outcome (Rank Order by Valence)	Percent Selecting Two Highest Response Categories (Valence) Desirability	(Instrumentality Two) Outcome Potential
Feeling of self-fulfillment and satisfaction	87%	67
Freedom to plan and make decisions concerning classroom activities	85	46
Feeling that your job and what you do is important	85	61
Opportunities to help students learn information needed for successful job performance	83	72
Adequate equipment and classroom facilities	81	26
High quality programs that attract students	79	56
A spirit of cooperation and desire to teach well among all faculty	77	36
A way of life which you like	75	46
Encouragement and support from administrators	73	36
Contacts with persons currently employed in the food and hospitality industry	70	53
Positive student feedback as part of class sessions	67	48
Reasonable expectations from administrators	66	29
Helping students make decisions regarding personal and professional goals	65	60
Vacation periods or other times which allow for opportunities outside your job	62	27
Respect from persons in the community	59	25
Assurance of continued employment after a few years probationary period	58	35
Friendships with faculty and staff of your college	57	23
Pay increases	53	19
Promotion	52	21
Prestige among food and hospitality educators and in the industry	52	33

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TABLE 5

VARIATIONS IN RESPONSE TO JOB-RELATED OUTCOMES BY DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Given as Percentages Selecting the Two Highest Response Categories

	(Valence) Desirability								(Instrumentality Two) Outcome Potential							
	Institution Type	Position Type	Years Teaching Experience	Highest Education	Age	Status	Sex		Institution Type	Position Type	Years Teaching Experience	Highest Education	Age	Status	Sex	
	AT, CC	Full, Pt	0-3, 4-10, 11+	AS, BA, MA	-40, 40+	NT, T	M, F		AT, CC	Full, Pt	0-3, 4-10, 11+	AS, BA, MA	-40, 41+	NT, T	M, F	
Feel Self-fulfilled	92 84										63 64 81					
Freedom to plan classes	100 78			69 85 90									42 58			
Feel job is important				69 85 90		87 87							51 69			
Help students learn											69 69 93		59 83	64 92		
Adequate equipment										22 33	44 23 39	43 31 35				
High quality programs				69 67 93		76 85							48 63			
Coop spirit among													24 45			
Way of life you like						83 71	71 85									
Admin encourage, support					67 77								27 43			
Industry contracts						63 82					38 54 69					
Continued employment													29 40	32 47		
Pay increases				44 42 64						19 20	25 19 13				28 4	
Promotion				31 32 71	67 42				24 20		27 23 7					

NOTE: Percentages are given only for those variables for which variation in response was statistically significant. ($p < .05$)

Definitions

AT - Agricultural and Technical College; CC - Community College

Full - Full time; Pt - part time

AS - Associate degree or less; BA - Bachelor's degree; MA- Master's degree

NT - Non-tenured; T - tenured

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